

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 IO-10 JUSE-00

NSAE-00 SNM-02 TRSE-00 USIA-06 NSC-05 OES-03 OMB-01

PA-01 PRS-01 USSS-00 L-03 /049 W

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R 160910Z DEC 75

FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 712

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SNAR, BM

SUBJECT: SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT TO CONGRESS

REF: (A) STATE 139804 (B) STATE 286666

1. SECTION A, ANNEX 8 PORTION FOLLOWS PER REF:

COUNTRY: BURMA

A. HIGHLIGHTS OF SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS DURING REPORTING PERIOD

1. PAST SIX MONTHS WITNESSED FAR MORE PROGRESS THAN PREVIOUS SIX MONTHS PERIODS IN ANTI-NARCOTICS FIELD. AT BEGINNING OF REPORTING PERIOD, THREE SENIOR GUB ANTI-NARCOTICS OFFICIALS CONCLUDED SUCCESSFUL AND FRUITFUL VISIT TO U.S., WHICH HAS LED TO CONTINUING DIALOGUES BETWEEN GUB AND MISSION AND INCREASED AWARENESS BY GUB OF METHODS AVAILABLE TO COMBAT NARCOTICS. APPARENTLY BREAKING LOGJAM, FIRST VISIT OPENED WAY FOR SERIES OF EXCHANGED VISITS. THREE GUB CUSTOMS OFFICIALS SUBSEQUENTLY ACCEPTED INVITATION FOR TOUR OF U.S. CUSTOMS FACILITIES. LATER S/NM AVIATION ADVISOR VISITED RANGOON TWICE; DR. MARTIN MCCAVITT, HEW, REHABILITATION EXPERT, WAS WARMLY WELCOMED, AND GROUNDWORK HAS BEEN LAID FOR DEA REGIONAL OFFICER ADDARIO CALL ON APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS.

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2. ON ENFORCEMENT SIDE, BURMA ARMY HAS BEEN EXTREMELY ACTIVE.

ATTACKS ON NORTHERN SHAN STATE REFINERIES IN JUNE/JULY CARRIED OVER TO A MAJOR OPERATION INVOLVING AT LEAST 2,500 TROOPS AGAINST A NARCOTICS STRONGHOLD LONG CONTROLLED BY KMT REMNANTS. HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS WORTH OF NARCOTICS WERE SEIZED AS WELL AS SIGNIFICANT AMOUNTS OF WEAPONS AND AMMUNITION. POLICE IN URBAN AREAS HAVE ALSO STEPPED UP ANTI-NARCOTICS ACTIVITY, CONDUCTING RAIDS AND SEIZURES THROUGHOUT BURMA. UNPRECEDENTED PUBLICITY WAS GIVEN TO BOTH ARMY AND POLICE ACTIONS, CAUSING COUNTRY-WIDE REACTION AND CALL FOR RENEWED ANTI-NARCOTICS EFFORTS BY PYITHU HLUTTAW (PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY). INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO MISSION INDICATES IN EXCESS OF 70 SEPARATE ACTIONS WHICH ENTAILED 150 ARRESTS; OVER 40 SEIZURES OF HEROIN, DESTRUCTION OF APPROXIMATELY 50 ACRES OF MARIJUANA, REPRESENTING AN ESTIMATED FOUR MILLION DOLLARS LOSS TO LOCAL TRAFFICKERS.

3. THE SIX HELICOPTERS RECEIVED THUS FAR UNDER MISSION NCAP BECAME OPERATIONAL DURING REPORTING PERIOD. FOUR AIRCRAFT ARRIVED IN JULY AND TWO IN SEPTEMBER (\$5.4 MILLION). MISSION HAS BEEN INFORMED, WITH PHOTOGRAPHIC SUPPORT, OF TACTICAL USE OF HELICOPTERS IN MAJOR OPERATION IN SEPTEMBER AGAINST KMT BASE (ARA 2). AIRCRAFT, UNARMED, HAVE BEEN USED TO TRANSPORT TROOPS AND SUPPLIES AND CARRY OUT WOUNDED. IN VIEW OF PROGRESS DEMONSTRATED TO DATE, \$3.1 PROJECT AGREEMENT WAS SIGNED IN NOVEMBER WITH THE BURMESE GOVERNMENT TO PROVIDE FOR FOUR ADDITIONAL BELL 205 HELICOPTERS UNDER THE U.S./BURMESE NARCOTICS AGREEMENT. \$1.1 MILLION AGREEMENT WAS ALSO SIGNED TO PROVIDE A REFURBISHED F-27 AIRCRAFT TO BE USED AS A COMMAND AND CONTROL AIRCRAFT IN ANTI-NARCOTICS OPERATION AS WELL AS RELATED COMMUNICATIONS AND OTHER EQUIPMENT. THE HELICOPTERS AND THE AIRCRAFT ARE TO BE DELIVERED DURING THE THIRD QUARTER OF FY 76.

4. FINALLY, NEGOTIATIONS ARE UNDER WAY FOR AN AGREEMENT TO PROVIDE FOLLOW-ON SPARES FOR THE HELICOPTERS.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DRUG CONTROL, US CONGRESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 DEC 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: greeneet
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975RANGOO03553
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750436-0905
From: RANGOON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751235/aaaabexo.tel
Line Count: 95
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 STATE 139804, 75 STATE 286666
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: greeneet
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags: ANOMALY
Review Date: 08 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <08 JUL 2003 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <12 NOV 2003 by greeneet>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT TO CONGRESS
TAGS: SNAR, BM
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006